

THE BREAKTHROUGH

After the repulse of the German attack on the 3d Division, the character of the fighting at Anzio underwent a radical change. For nearly three months, VI Corps and *Fourteenth Army* limited their operations to an active defense of the positions they held at the conclusion of the German offensive. The Allied and enemy forces in the Anzio area were marking time, awaiting the renewal of Allied offensive operations on the southern front. Both forces engaged in aggressive patrolling. The Allied Air Force and VI Corps artillery constantly pounded enemy positions, and the enemy retaliated with medium and long-range artillery fire and air raids against Allied shipping and supply dumps. After drafting plans for renewing his offensive against the beachhead, the enemy decided to conserve his depleted combat strength for the big Allied drive to come. VI Corps built up its forces and accumulated a huge supply reserve in preparation for the great May offensive which was to carry the Fifth Army through to Rome.

Adjusting itself to its new defensive role, the *Fourteenth Army* regrouped its forces by reducing the number of units occupying the perimeter of the beachhead front. During March, the *Hermann Goering Panzer Division* was sent north to Leghorn for rest and refitting; the *114th Light Division* was transferred to the Adriatic front; and *Fourteenth Army's* two best divisions, the *26th Panzer* and *29th Panzer Grenadier*, were withdrawn to the area south of Rome as *Army* reserves. These two divisions were subsequently designated as *Army Group* reserves, making them available for action against an Allied offensive in the south, a new at-

tempt of VI Corps to break out of the beachhead, or a new Allied landing in the enemy rear above Anzio. Some replacement units arrived at the beachhead, including two battalions of Italian troops that were employed east of the main Mussolini Canal in the Littoria sector. The Germans displayed little confidence in their Axis partners, brigading them with German formations down to alternate platoons in the line and at night taking over the positions held by Italian troops.

The enemy regroupings substantially reduced the combat strength of the forces holding the beachhead perimeter; in early April, only the reinforced *3d Panzer Grenadier Division* was rated as having first-class combat quality. But the total number of *Fourteenth Army* troops was greater in mid-March than during the February offensives. As of 14 March, it reported a strength of 135,698, a total which included about 65,800 German combat troops; by 10 April, this combat strength had increased to 70,400.

The enemy seriously considered a renewal of offensive operations at Anzio. Tentative plans drafted on 13 March provided for a large-scale attack to be launched on 29 March either in the Albano road sector or from Cisterna. On 23 March the date of the projected attack was postponed, and it was abandoned altogether on 10 April. Field Marshal Kesselring was reluctant to commit his best reserves, the *26th Panzer* and *29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions*, in a renewed offensive at Anzio; without them, General Mackensen judged that a large-scale attack could not succeed. When the Allies finally launched their spring offensive

along the southern front on 11 May, the enemy was forced to strip the *Fourteenth Army* of its reserves in order to check the Allied advance. Thus, when VI Corps joined in the offensive on 23 May, the forces opposing it had been greatly weakened.

Fifth Army also undertook an extensive program of regrouping and reinforcement of VI Corps units at Anzio. Among British units, the 56 Division, which had been rushed to Anzio in the critical days of February, was relieved by the 5 Division in early March and left the beachhead. The

British Commando units were also withdrawn. The 1 Division remained at Anzio, except for the 24 Guards Brigade which was sent to Naples to reorganize; it was replaced by the 18 Brigade. Of the American units, only the paratroopers and Ranger Force left the beachhead. The 504th Parachute Infantry, long overdue to rejoin the 82d Airborne Division, left for the United Kingdom late in March; on 1 April the 509th Parachute Infantry Battalion also departed. These losses were more than offset by the arrival of new units, notably the

A DESTROYED AMMUNITION DUMP in the beachhead area, hit by German long-range artillery. Although this stack of about 25 tons of 105-mm. ammunition was destroyed, the explosion was kept from spreading by the earthen revetments which protected every supply pile.



veteran 34th Division; this division, which began to disembark on 21 March, relieved the 3d Division on the Cisterna front on 28 March, after the latter had completed sixty-seven consecutive days of front-line duty. The arrival of 14,000 replacements in March brought Allied units up to full strength. By the end of the month the numerical strength of the combat units of VI Corps was equal to that of six full divisions—approximately 90,000 men—and considerably exceeded that of the opposing *Fourteenth Army*.

VI Corps, like the enemy, at least contemplated a resumption of the offensive during March. Preliminary plans for a large-scale operation in the Albano road sector were issued on 11 March. A definite plan was outlined in Field Order No. 18 of 18 March. It proposed a frontal assault by the British 1 and 5 Divisions against the German salient astride the Albano road; meanwhile the American 45th Division was to attack from the southeast toward the Factory. The 5 Division was to continue its attack along the old railroad bed which ran northwest from Carroceto. The 45th Division, in cooperation with the 3d Division striking from the east, was to follow through by capturing the Factory and Carroceto. The 1st Armored Division would then pass through the 1 Division up the Albano road and exploit the advances of the infantry. Other projects for offensive operations were issued in April for planning purposes, but there seems to have been no serious intent of putting them into effect. VI Corps as well as the enemy awaited the renewal of the offensive in the south. In the meantime, it limited its operations to patrolling and local attacks designed to keep the enemy on the defensive.

The description of some of a typical day's operations and events may serve to illustrate the weeks of relative inaction at Anzio. Before dawn on 15 April, eight enemy aircraft dropped antipersonnel and high explosive bombs in the areas of the 1 Division and 1st Armored Division. They struck an ammunition dump and a gasoline dump, and caused a few casualties at the 1st Armored Division command post. Antiaircraft shot down one of the

enemy planes and probably destroyed another. At 0530, the 2d Regiment of the 1st Special Service Force, supported by twelve tanks of the 1st Armored Regiment, launched a raid on the village of Cerreto Alto, southwest of Littoria; after seizing this objective and other enemy positions in the vicinity, the raiding force withdrew at 1115. Sixty-one enemy prisoners, including seventeen Italians, were captured. The attacking force suffered only one casualty but lost two medium tanks. Elsewhere along the front the situation remained unchanged. Enemy artillery fire was somewhat lighter than on preceding days, and the usual long-range firing of heavy enemy guns did not occur. American artillery fires were directed against enemy tanks and self-propelled guns in front of Isola Bella; and in the afternoon the newly introduced 240-mm. howitzers destroyed several enemy-occupied buildings in the vicinity of Cisterna. On the British front, mortars were used to scatter enemy troops working on fixed defenses. During the day, Allied planes flew ninety-nine sorties in the VI Corps area, somewhat fewer than normal. Behind the lines, 3,513 tons of supplies were unloaded, slightly above the average daily total of 3,191 for April. Total combat casualties of VI Corps on 15 April were 105 (20 killed, 83 wounded, and 2 missing), slightly below the daily average of 107.5 for April.

The Problem of Supply

The Anzio landing of VI Corps as originally conceived was to be the prelude to a short-term operation that would lead to a quick junction with an advancing main Fifth Army. When that advance failed to materialize, the initial plans for supplying the beachhead had to be radically revised and expanded. Supplies were brought in by preloaded trucks on LST's, by LCT's, and on Liberty ships. Beginning on 28 January, a convoy of six LST's was dispatched daily from Naples, each vessel carrying fifty preloaded trucks. Each convoy brought in a 1,500-ton load, 60 percent of which was ammunition, 20 percent fuel, and 20 percent rations. Fifteen LCT's also made a weekly turnaround from



A RAID ON AN ENEMY POSITION, as seen in these four pictures, was typical of operations in the weeks of relative quiet at Anzio. Above: A 1st Special Service Force detachment attacks the position. Below: Rifle fire keeps the enemy down as the team moves closer.





RUSHING THE FARMHOUSE after the German defenders had been seen leaving the buildings (above) and, finally, soldiers in the house pouring machine-gun fire into a haystack after the last enemy had been either killed or forced to retreat across the field.



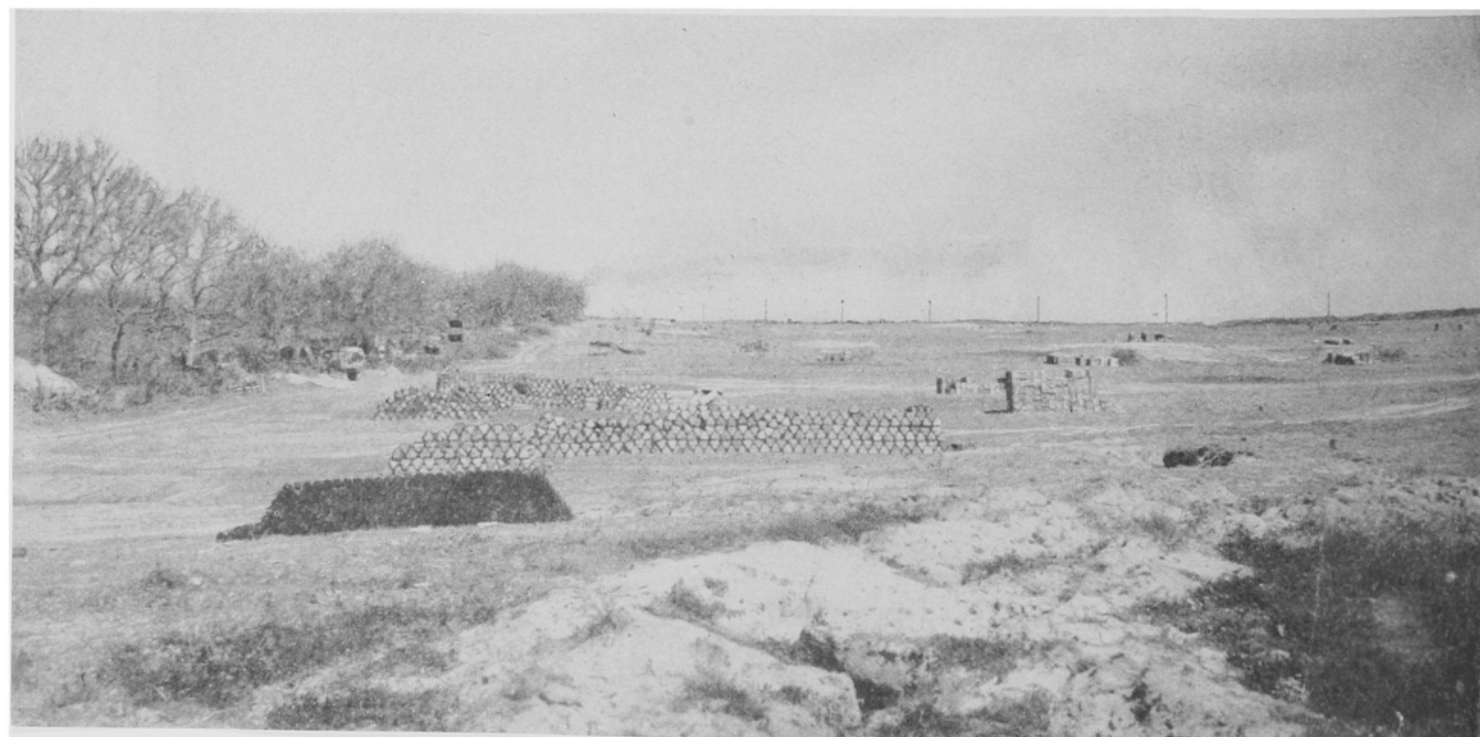
Naples with supplies. Every ten days four Liberty ships, loaded with supplies at Naples or at North African ports, were scheduled to arrive at the beachhead. The LST's and LCT's could dock in Anzio harbor, while the Liberty ships had to be unloaded off shore and their cargo brought into the harbor or over the beaches by LCT's or (in calm weather) directly by DUKW's. Since VI Corps was not equipped to handle supply functions, Fifth Army assumed control of the port and dump areas on 6 February. The 540th Engineers took over the operation of the port and beaches, and their commanding officer, Col. George W. Marvin, became port commandant.

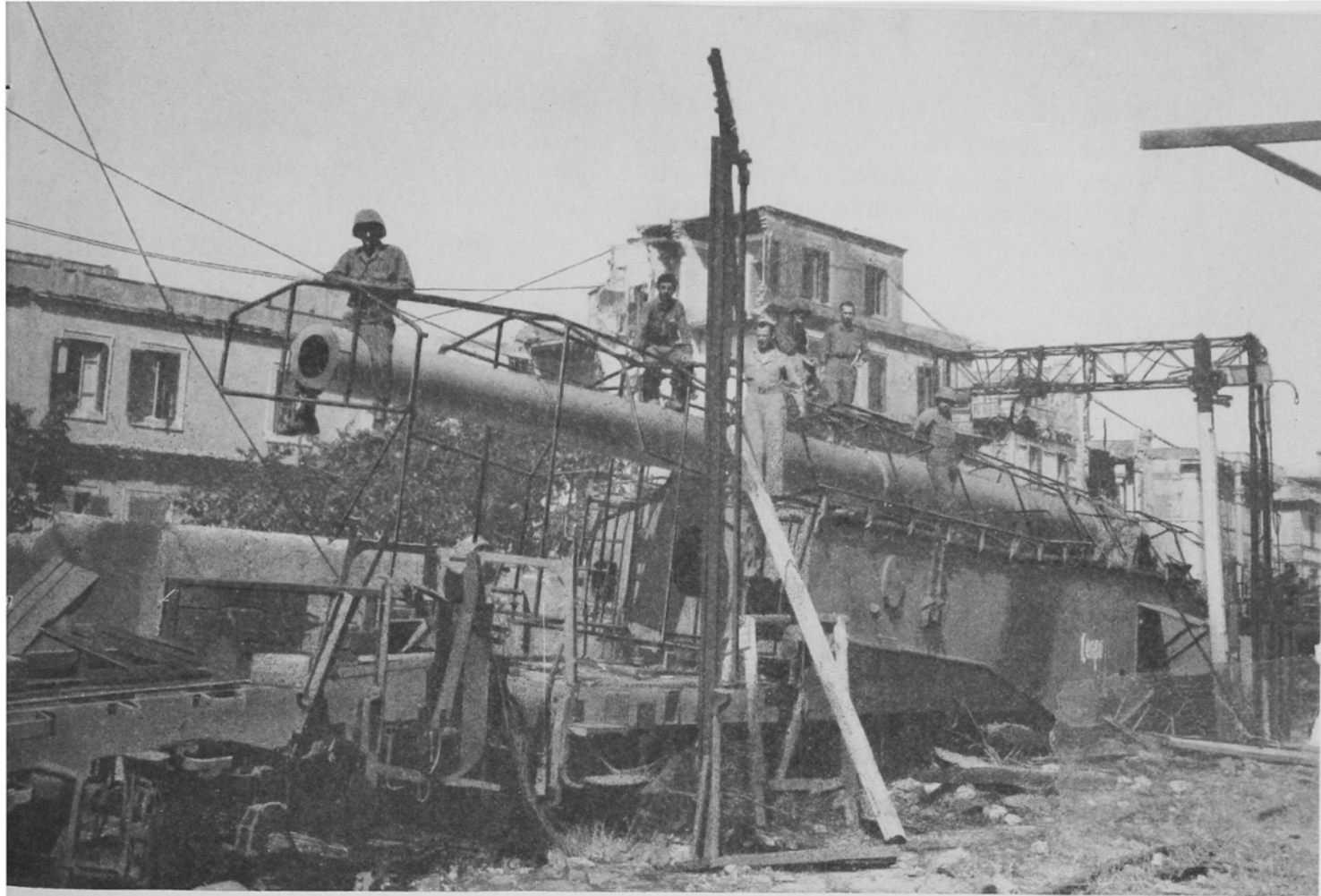
As the whole beachhead area was within range of observed enemy artillery fire and subjected to constant air raids, a difficult and unique supply situation prevailed at Anzio. Enemy artillery and air attacks endangered beach and dock personnel and reduced their efficiency by an estimated 10 percent. Since ammunition and gasoline dumps were of necessity concentrated in a small and highly vulnerable area, some material damage also occurred. Between 22 January and 10 March, 1,043.8

tons of ammunition were destroyed by enemy bombing and 228.5 tons by artillery fire, an average of 27.7 tons per day. But material losses were at no time critical. Supplies were dispersed in many separate dumps and protected by earthen bunkers erected by bulldozers and Italian laborers. To help in this work, the 16th Armored Engineer Battalion improvised an armored bulldozer by mounting a bulldozer blade on an M-4 tank. As time went on, VI Corps counterbattery fires, improved air defenses, and bombing attacks on enemy gun positions reduced the effectiveness of enemy bombing and shelling of supply areas.

At the end of January the security of the beachhead was threatened by ammunition and labor shortages. For a time, the Corps' most valuable counterbattery weapon (the 155-mm. howitzer) had to be limited to twenty-five rounds per gun per day, but gradually the supplies of ammunition were replenished and reserves built up. The beachhead needed many civilian laborers to clean up debris and to dig in dump areas. Soon after the landing, the bulk (about 22,000) of the civilian population was evacuated from the beachhead, and only about

A SUPPLY DUMP in the Anzio area is screened from enemy observation by smoke laid down by the 179th Chemical Smoke Co. A few of the stacks have been revetted, and others are dispersed widely to minimize damage from enemy artillery and air bombardment.





ANZIO ANNIE, a German 280-mm. railroad rifle of the type employed during the latter part of the Anzio campaign. When the Allied breakthrough occurred, the enemy moved this piece to Civitavecchia, where it was knocked out by American air attacks.

750 able-bodied civilians were left available for work. To alleviate the labor shortage Italian workers were recruited in Naples and brought to Anzio. At first a port battalion was stationed at the beachhead to unload Liberty ships. About 1 March a new practice was adopted of placing a port company on board each Liberty ship at Naples, and having it return with the vessel to Naples. The opportunity for a quick departure from the dangerous Anzio area was an incentive to rapid unloading.

A shortage of LCT's, needed to unload Liberty ships, developed at the beginning of February. Most of these craft had been in service for more than a year without overhaul and they frequently broke down. On 6 February only fifteen were avail-

able, a number that was increased to twenty-two by 12 February. As a stop-gap, from ten to twenty LCI's were successfully employed in unloading supplies. An effort was made to persuade the Liberty ships to come in closer to shore so that they could be unloaded directly by DUKW's, but ship captains were reluctant to do so in the face of heavy shelling. Between 450 and 490 DUKW's were in use at Anzio. The craft situation greatly eased at the end of February, when sufficient LCT's again became available.

By March, supply problems at the beachhead had been largely solved. With improving weather and adequate craft for unloading, it was possible to discharge five or six Liberty ships at a time. The

proportion of supplies unloaded from Liberty ships greatly increased; by May they were discharging six times as much cargo as the LST's. The greatest volume of supplies came in during the month of March, when 157,274 tons were discharged; on the peak day, 29 March, 7,828 tons were unloaded. Large reserves were built up in anticipation of the Fifth Army's resumption of the offensive. By 23 May the beachhead had, in addition to its normal 10-day reserve, a month's additional reserve of supplies. Between 22 January and 1 June, 513,511 long tons of supplies were discharged at Anzio, the

over-all daily average being 3,920 tons. As a result of careful planning and efficient operation, supply never became a critical problem at Anzio.

Life at the Beachhead

From the beginning of March the forward positions at Anzio beachhead were stabilized and remained practically unchanged until the breakthrough in May. Conditions at Anzio resembled the quiescent periods of trench warfare on the Western Front during World War I. The great

VI CORPS HEADQUARTERS AT NETTUNO *occupied extensive wine cellars under the town. Carved out of solid rock, the cellars were safe from even the heaviest enemy bombardment.*



bulk of VI Corps casualties were caused by enemy air raids and especially by enemy artillery fire. The narrow confines of the beachhead made it peculiarly vulnerable to enemy artillery, which ranged from 88-mm. guns up to giant 280-mm. railroad guns. One of the latter was popularly known as the "Anzio Express," also as "Anzio Annie." These big guns, not to be confused with the smaller railroad guns which the Germans had employed during February, were first reported in action on 24 March. During March, 83 percent of the combat casualties of the 3d Division were caused by shell fragments, although the division occupied a long sector of the forward line until the end of the month. VI Corps' highly centralized fire control center carried out a systematic program of counterbattery firing to combat enemy artillery. Its efforts became more effective in April with the arrival at the beachhead of heavier artillery weapons—8-inch guns and howitzers and 240-mm. howitzers.

Smoke generators, used to create an artificial fog behind the lines, helped to reduce the accuracy of enemy artillery and of bombing; but there was only one effective answer to the problem of security from the constant pounding of enemy shells and bombs: that was to go underground. The whole beachhead area became a honeycomb of trenches, fox holes, and dugouts as the men burrowed into the sandy ground. Bulldozers dug pits for guns and vehicles and pushed up tons of earth around the neatly stacked piles of gasoline cans and ammunition which were located in every open field in the rear areas. During the rainy winter months the process of digging in was hampered by the proximity of the ground water to the surface. Fox holes and dugouts quickly filled with water. With the arrival of spring, warm and sunny days dried up the ground and it became possible to construct a dugout without striking water. Viewed from the air the beachhead created the illusion that thousands of giant moles had been at work.

In the American hospital area near Anzio, the 36th Engineers set to work excavating foundations three and one-half feet deep for hospital tents; the

sides of each tent were further strengthened by sandbag walls. Even with these improvements, the hospital area remained one of the more dangerous spots on the beachhead. No soldier who was at Anzio will forget the work of the doctors, nurses, and aid men who served with them. When the shells were coming over or the air raid siren signalled a red alert others could seek shelter; the doctor performing an operation or the nurse tending a patient had no choice but to continue in the performance of his or her task. A measure of their courage and willingness to sacrifice themselves for their patients is indicated by the losses suffered by medical personnel at the beachhead. Ninety-two were reported killed in action (including 6 nurses), 387 wounded, 19 captured, and 60 reported missing in action.

VI Corps headquarters was initially located in the Hotel de Ville at Nettuno. After this building was struck by shells and bombs, the headquarters was established in caverns which the inhabitants had used for wine cellars. This was a popular spot while the wine lasted, but men tied to desk jobs in the little cubbyholes off the narrow corridors soon felt that they were sealed for life in catacombs. After the Fifth Army Advanced Command Post was established at the beachhead, it was located in a tunnel beneath Villa Borghese on the hill above Anzio harbor. Other troops built their own shelters. Wooden beams, doors, scrap lumber, and huge wine barrels from destroyed farmhouses, together with hundreds of thousands of sandbags and ammunitions boxes, were consumed in the construction of tiny underground homes. The barrels, sunk deep in the ground, made good bedrooms if one could stand the odor of stale wine. In any event, protection was more important than comfort.

To counteract the debilitating effects of static warfare, General Truscott not only conducted a vigorous training program but also endeavored to give his men as much rest and recreation as possible when they were out of the line. Owing to the open nature of most of the beachhead terrain, troops in forward areas usually stayed under-

ground during the day; at night combat patrols probed deep into the enemy lines, and occasionally a company or battalion launched an attack to take prisoners or capture or destroy a strategic group of buildings. Recreation and training facilities were limited by the lack of a safe rear area. The 1st Armored Division built two underground theaters, each capable of holding over two hundred men. Each division set up small recreation and bath units; at the latter, the men could obtain a complete change of clothing. On the coast below Nettuno the 3d Division established a large rest camp where men could combine training with opportunities for swimming, going to the movies, and writing letters. Every four days VI Corps sent 750 men by LST to the Fifth Army rest camp at Caserta. Troops at the beachhead were given priority on mail, Post Exchange supplies, and recreation equip-

ment. The quality of their food also improved. During February rear-area as well as front-line troops lived almost exclusively on C and K rations; by March calmer seas and lessened enemy activity permitted Liberty ships to bring in fresh meat and a high percentage of B rations.

Where organized recreation was impossible, men provided their own amusement. Horseshoes were in great demand, and volley ball and even baseball games were played close to the fighting front. When enemy shells started coming in, the men ducked for cover and then calmly returned to their games. A few troops had their own chicken pens; others, less fortunate, dickered with the few remaining Italian farmers for eggs. Patrols for chickens and livestock were as carefully planned as patrols against the enemy. To help pass the long hours in dugouts men improvised radio sets on

RESETTING THE HOSPITAL TENTS at the beachhead. This photo shows three phases of construction. First (far left), a burlap retaining wall is set up; second (center), earth is packed around the outside; third and, (right), a ward tent is erected over the retentment. A news-reel photographer records the construction of this evacuation hospital.





LIVING CONDITIONS AT THE FRONT *during the latter part of the Anzio campaign were much improved as the men protected their fox holes with sandbags, tarpaulins, and camouflaged roofs. Fighting was light and living was leisurely, disturbed only by sporadic shelling and bombing.*

which they could listen to the Fifth Army Expeditionary Station and also to Axis propaganda broadcasts. "Sally," the German radio entertainer, was as well known to them as the "Anzio Express." They enjoyed her throaty voice and her selections of the latest American popular music; they laughed at her crude propaganda and that of her partner "George," just as they laughed at the German propaganda leaflets which they collected for souvenirs. German efforts to sow discontent among the Allied troops at the beachhead were singularly unsuccessful. They merely supplied an additional source of entertainment.

It was easy for a replacement arriving at the beachhead on one of the beautiful spring days of April or early May to gain the impression that, despite all the evidence of destruction around the tiny harbor, Anzio was a relatively safe spot. Even the occasional white plume of water, rising as an enemy shell plunged into the calm bay, had an impersonal air about it. Men worked at the docks unloading LST's or LCT's, drivers of DUKW's churned their vehicles out across the bay toward the Liberty ships outside the harbor, antiaircraft crews lolled by their guns, and a few men swam along the shore below the battered villas. But the apparent

unconcern of the men was deceptive. The terrific tension under which they had lived during the critical days of February had eased somewhat, but some measure of it was still there. The next shell to whistle over the beachhead might well land in the hold of a ship or obliterate a truck driving through the streets of Anzio or Nettuno. At dusk the feeling of tension increased; men around the harbor kept an eye on the end of the jetty, where the raising of a flag gave warning of another air attack. Although the enemy abandoned daylight raids after the costly attacks of February, anywhere from one to half a dozen attacks were made every night, and the enemy shelling, sporadic during daylight hours, substantially increased after dark. One night at Anzio dispelled all illusions of security. The battle of the beachhead remained a grim and deadly struggle to the end.

Casualties

Both VI Corps and the enemy suffered heavy losses in combat casualties during the four months between the Allied landing at Anzio on 22 January and the attack out of the beachhead on 23 May. In presenting casualty statistics, a note of caution is in order. Since it is impossible to compile an exact record of combat casualties for any large-scale operation, those presented here should be treated as an approximation.

The combat casualties of VI Corps at Anzio through 22 May numbered about 30,000, including at least 4,400 killed and 18,000 wounded in action. Of these totals, American units lost approximately 17,000 men, including at least 2,800 killed and 11,000 wounded in action. The enemy reported the capture of 6,800 Allied prisoners, including about 2,400 American troops. About two-thirds of the combat casualties occurred during the period of heavy fighting that ended on 3 March. During the first thirty days of the Anzio operation, the combat casualties of VI Corps amounted to about 17 percent of its effective strength. British combat losses were relatively heavier than American, in terms of the number of troops engaged; during the above 30-day period, their units lost 27 percent of their

effective strength. In addition to the combat losses, VI Corps reported over 37,000 noncombat casualties during the whole period of the Anzio operation, more than 26,000 of whom were American. About 33,000 casualties, combat and noncombat, were evacuated by sea from Anzio—including 24,000 Americans—without the loss of a single patient's life as a result of the process of moving men from shore hospitals to the waiting ships.

Fourteenth Army lost between 28,000 and 30,000 men as combat casualties in its operations against the Anzio beachhead. This total included at least 5,500 killed and 17,500 wounded in action. The Allies captured more than 4,500 enemy prisoners of war. The German combat losses during the period of relative inaction after 3 March were about 10,000, almost exactly the same as those of the Allied forces.

The total combat casualties of VI Corps and *Fourteenth Army* were thus roughly equal, although the enemy had a larger number of troops killed in action. Three factors made the enemy losses relatively more costly in terms of combat strength than those of the Allies. The Germans suffered higher losses among combat units, they received far fewer replacements than Allied units, and the replacements they did receive were of progressively poorer quality.

The Breakthrough, 23 May–4 June

On the night of 11–12 May, main Fifth Army launched its spring offensive against the Gustav Line in the south. (Map No. 2.) After the failure of the Cassino assaults in February, the Fifth Army boundary had been moved southwestward toward the coast, and the British Eighth Army took command on the Cassino front. In the new offensive, Fifth Army attacked from its bridgehead north of the Garigliano into the hill masses between the Liri Valley and the sea; while the Eighth Army, heavily reinforced, at the same time launched its attack on the Cassino front. Cassino and the dominant mountains to the north fell only after a week of heavy fighting, and the Eighth Army pushed

on slowly up the Liri Valley against strong German opposition. Meanwhile, after three days of stubborn fighting, Fifth Army's two corps—the French Expeditionary Corps on the right, and II Corps on the left along the coast—broke through the Gustav Line positions and started the rapid drive northward that was not to be halted until Rome was entered on 4 June.

As late as 15 May, General Clark had under consideration a plan to shift the two divisions of II Corps (the 85th and 88th) by sea to Anzio after they had completed their initial breakthrough in the south. They were to have combined with VI Corps to conduct a powerful drive out of the beachhead. But the pace of the advance in the south promised to collapse the German coastal defenses and permit a quick juncture between II and VI Corps by land. On 20 May, therefore, General Clark directed II Corps to continue its attack toward Terracina, situated at the southern end of the coastal plain that extended northwestward to the Anzio beachhead. Terracina fell on the night of 23–24 May. American troops then raced northward over the flat land of the Pontine Marshes to meet the 1st Battalion, 36th Combat Engineers (Task Force Brett), which had advanced south from the beachhead. The junction was effected at 0731 on 25 May, and General Clark (who had moved to Anzio to direct the offensive) personally greeted his men from the south at 1020. Anzio was a beachhead no longer; it was now the left flank of the main fighting front.

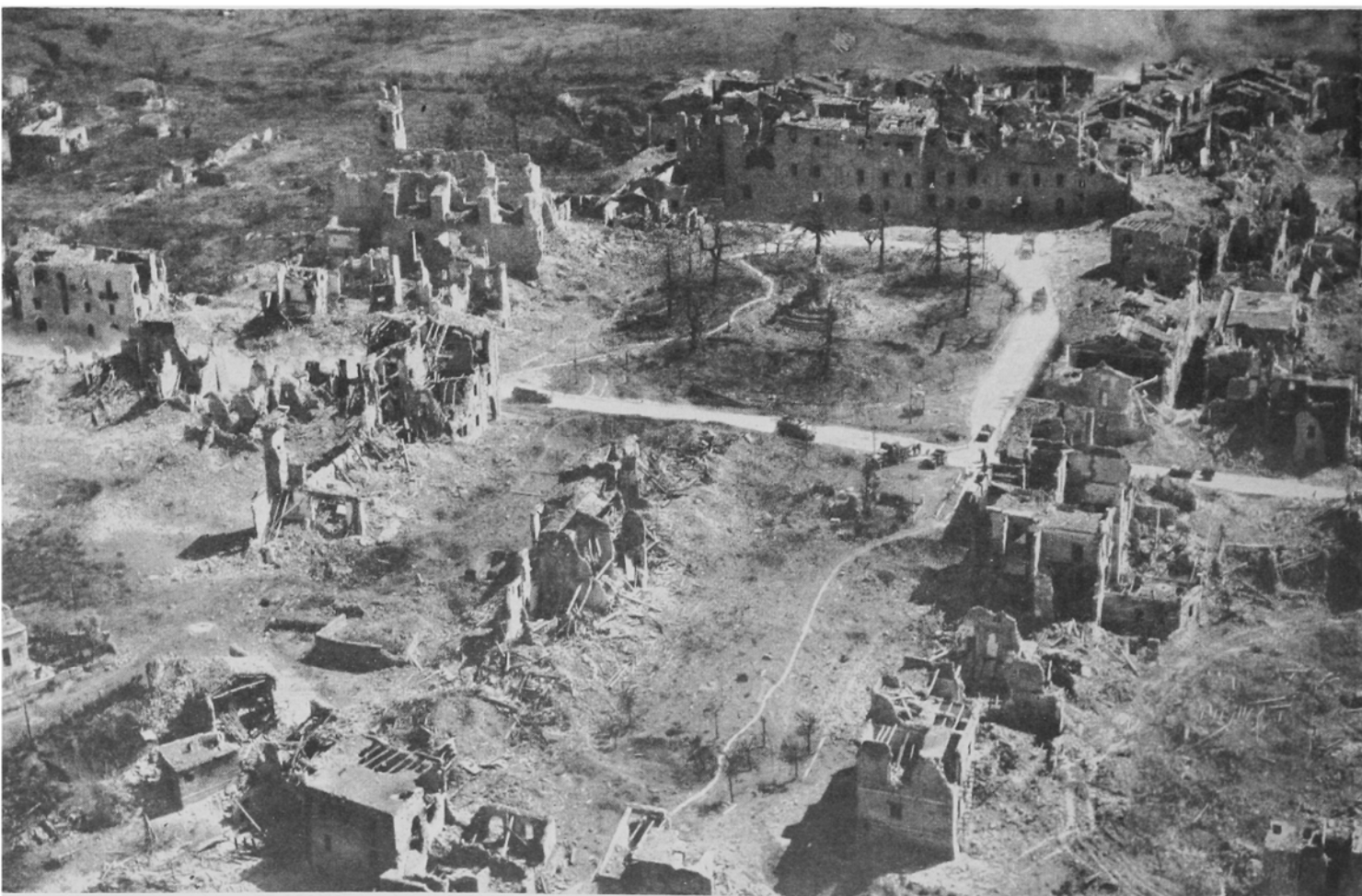
During the first eleven days of the spring offensive, the character of the Anzio front remained unchanged; but behind the forward lines, the forces of VI Corps were busily preparing for their part in the big Allied drive. To strengthen the beachhead forces, early in May Combat Command B had joined the 1st Armored Division, which was now at full strength. On 22 May, the day before the attack out of the beachhead, the 36th Division landed at Anzio; this brought the strength of the beachhead forces to seven full divisions together with a large number of auxiliary supporting units. VI Corps had prepared three different plans for an

attack out of the beachhead; on 5 May, plan BUFFALO was adopted to govern the Anzio offensive. However, to deceive the enemy, preparations for all three plans were carried out. Essentially, plan BUFFALO projected a breakthrough on the Cisterna front toward Cori at the base of the Lepini Mountains and Velletri at the base of Colli Laziali; the attack would then continue through the Velletri Gap to Valmontone in order to cut Highway No. 6, the main supply route of the German *Tenth Army*. The initial assault was to be launched through the front held by the 34th Division, with the 1st Armored Division advancing on the left, the 3d Division in the center (directly toward Cisterna), and the reinforced 1st Special Service Force on the right. On the left flank the 45th Division was to penetrate beyond Carano as far as the Campoleone–Cisterna railroad. The 36th Division, after its arrival, was earmarked to exploit a breakthrough. The British 1 and 5 Divisions, holding the western end of the beachhead front, were to launch local attacks to deceive the enemy as to the main course of the beachhead offensive and to contain enemy forces that were opposing them. (Map No. 21.) The British divisions were detached from VI Corps and reverted to Fifth Army control on 22 May, the day before the attack.

Until the Fifth and Eighth Armies began their offensive on 11–12 May, the German *Fourteenth Army* had substantially maintained its strength. The *26th Panzer* and *29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions* had become *Army Group* reserves, but they were kept in the area south of Rome and were available for use against an attempted Allied thrust out of the beachhead. Then came the breakthrough in the south, and Field Marshal Kesselring was forced not only to commit his *Army Group* reserves but also to strip *Fourteenth Army* of its combat reserves to bolster the hard-pressed *Tenth Army*. General Mackensen protested, but his protests were overruled until it was too late to stem the American advance out of the beachhead. In anticipating the Allied spring offensive, the enemy made two major miscalculations, revealed in an estimate of the Allied situation drafted on 30 April. The Ger-



THE CAPTURE OF CISTERNA came as the beachhead forces linked up with American troops advancing from the south. Many prisoners were found in the battered ruins (above) and hustled to the rear. From the air (below), Cisterna appeared as nothing but a gutted pile of rubble.



mans believed (and continued to believe as late as 20 May) that Fifth Army would make a new seaborne landing, either between Anzio and the southern front at Gaeta or Terracina, or (less probably) to the northwest of Anzio near the mouth of the Tiber River. In view of this belief, Field Marshal Kesselring was reluctant to release his reserves or strengthen the German forces in the immediate vicinity of Anzio until the very eve of the Anzio offensive. The second German miscalculation—natural enough, in view of the preceding offensives—was that VI Corps would launch its main assault up the Albano road past the Factory. Thus the better German divisions—the *65th Infantry* and *3d Panzer Grenadier*—continued to occupy the Albano road sector; while the Cisterna and Mussolini Canal sectors were held by the weaker *362d* and *715th Infantry Divisions*. When the attack came on 23 May, the enemy was unable to shift his strength to the Cisterna sector.

At 0545 on 23 May, a tremendous Allied artillery barrage was directed against the enemy defenses along the Cisterna front. Forty-five minutes later, American tanks and infantry emerged from the smoke all along the front from Carano to the Mussolini Canal to launch the assault. At first, the enemy resistance was stiff, and German mine fields took a heavy toll of American tanks and tank destroyers; but before noon, the 1st Special Service Force had cut Highway No. 7 below Cisterna, and all units had reached their initial objectives. Bad weather curtailed the planned air support, but before the day was over 722 missions had been flown; Cisterna and more distant objectives were heavily bombed. By evening, the 1st Armored Division had crossed the Cisterna–Campoleone railroad, and had smashed the enemy main line of resistance.

The enemy estimated that, by the end of the first day's attack, the *362d Infantry Division* had lost 50 percent of its fighting power, and two regiments of the *715th Infantry Division* had been badly mauled. The *Hermann Goering Panzer Division* was rushed southward from Leghorn; and *Fourteenth Army* planned to detach combat units from *I Parachute Corps*, holding the Moletta River–Al-

bano road sector, to bolster the shattered forces of *LXXVI Panzer Corps* on the Cisterna front. This step was frustrated by the holding attacks of the British 1 and 5 Divisions and the attack on the left flank by the 45th Division. General Mackensen realized his precarious position, but his request to withdraw his left flank to the base of the Lepini Mountains was refused.

Resuming the attack on 24 May, VI Corps troops drove forward beyond the railroad to cut Highway No. 7 above Cisterna, and virtually to encircle Cisterna itself. On 25 May the German defenses to the rear of Cisterna crumbled, and Cisterna itself fell to the troops of the 3d Division, who collected nearly a thousand enemy prisoners. By nightfall, 3d Division and 1st Special Service Force units were at the base of the Lepini Mountains, before Cori; meanwhile, 1st Armored Division troops had reached a position halfway between Cori and Velletri, thus facing the entrance of the Velletri Gap leading toward Valmontone. On 26 May, the 1st Armored Division advanced to within two miles of Velletri; while the 3d Division raced through the Velletri Gap its reconnaissance units reached the outskirts of Artena, only three miles from the goal of Valmontone and Highway No. 6. Although Artena was captured on the following day, the VI Corps advance then came to a temporary halt. The plans for the continuation of the Fifth Army's attack were being recast, and the enemy had now somewhat recovered from his confusion. In particular, elements of the *Hermann Goering Panzer Division* had reached the Valmontone area and were counterattacking the *3d Division*. (Map No. 22.)

VI Corps' highly successful offensive out of the Anzio beachhead was nevertheless costly in losses, both in men and material. In the first five days of the attack, combat casualties exceeded 4,000; they were almost twice as heavy in killed and wounded as during the five days of the big German attack of 16–20 February. The 1st Armored Division and other armored units supporting the infantry lost at least eighty-six tanks and tank destroyers in the first day's attack alone. Enemy losses were far heavier; no figures are available for the number of en-

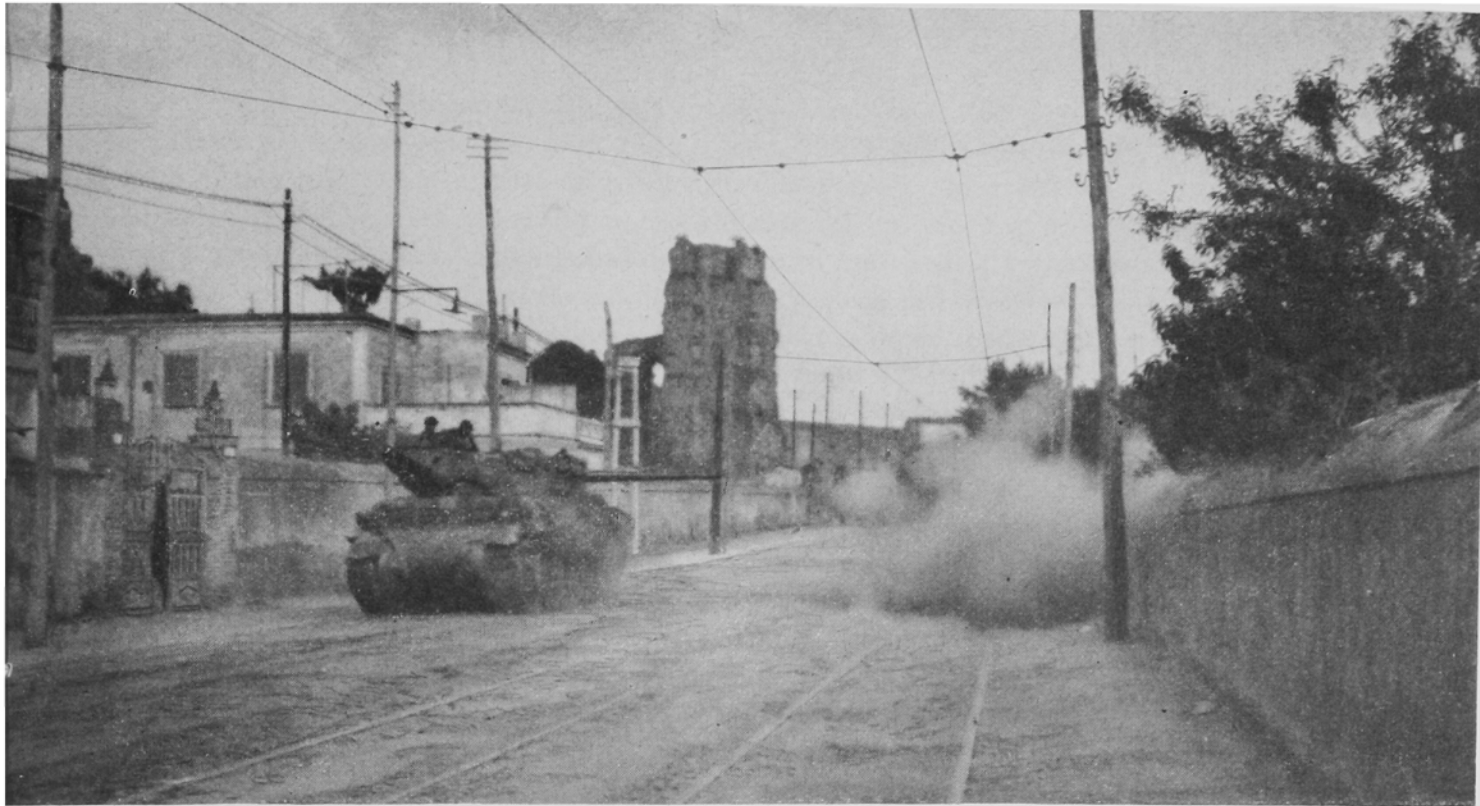
emy troops that were killed and wounded, but in the first five days of the attack VI Corps captured 4,838 prisoners and, among items of enemy material, destroyed or damaged more than 2,700 motor transports.

On 26 May General Clark issued new orders to VI Corps which reshaped the nature and direction of its attack. Hitherto, the main axis of advance had been toward Valmontone; now, the weight of the VI Corps drive was to be shifted to the west of Colli Laziali, to seize a line from the Factory through Campoleone to Lanuvio. (Map No. 23.) The 34th Division would advance northwest from below Velletri (which was stubbornly defended

by the enemy) toward Lanuvio, while the 45th Division attacked toward Campoleone Station. Initially, the 1st Armored Division was allotted the task of attacking Velletri; subsequently (28 May) it was shifted to the left flank to strengthen the attack of the 45th Division. In the Ardena area, the 3d Division was to continue its advance on Valmontone, while the wide gap between the attacks to the west and east of Colli Laziali was to be plugged by the 36th Division. This general plan was carried out in the face of stiffening enemy resistance. The 45th Division drove to Campoleone village by 29 May, and the 34th Division reached the outskirts of Lanuvio on the same date. (Map

THE FALL OF THE FACTORY came the morning of 28 May as British troops pushed northward through its still-burning ruins. The soldier at the right crouches against a wall, taking cover from a few enemy snipers still remaining in the wreckage.





THE ENTRY INTO ROME on 3 June climaxed months of bitter fighting at Anzio. Troops moving into the Eternal City found little trace of the fast-retreating enemy, and fired at only a few suspected positions.

No. 24.) The 36th Division moved in before Velletri, but initially its role was limited to aggressive reconnaissance. In the east, the 3d Division was held on the defensive by the counterattacking *Hermann Goering Panzer Division*. On 30 May the 3d Division and 1st Special Service Force passed to the control of II Corps, which thereafter commanded the attack toward Valmontone and Highway No. 6.

The enemy had been hard pressed to round up sufficient troops to check the American advance. He had been forced to withdraw to a new defensive line, extending from Ardea near the coast through Lanuvio and Velletri to a position before Valmontone, and German units were ordered by Hitler to hold this line at all costs. In a change of Corps boundaries, *Fourteenth Army* assigned the sector west of Colli Laziali to *I Parachute Corps*, and the sector to the east to *LXXVI Panzer Corps*. In the reshuffling of units and the Corps bound-

daries, the mountainous region of Colli Laziali just east of Velletri was left temporarily almost denuded of enemy troops; the Germans had concentrated their depleted forces in defense of Lanuvio and Valmontone.

At dusk on 30 May the Fifth Army drive appeared to have been stalled. (Map No. 24.) On the left flank west of Colli Laziali, the 1st Armored Division and 45th Division had fought bitterly but unsuccessfully along the Albano road above Campoleone all day; and the attack of the 34th Division before Lanuvio had been stopped on 29 May. On the new II Corps front east of Colli Laziali, the 85th Division was just coming in to reinforce the 3d Division, which had remained on the defensive since 27 May. Actually, General Clark had been informed by General Truscott of the gap in the enemy defense line along the rugged base of Colli Laziali between the units of *I Parachute Corps* and *LXXVI Panzer Corps*, and he

moved quickly to exploit this weakness. Late in the evening of 30 May, troops of the 36th Division (142d Infantry, followed by 143d Infantry) started to climb the steep slopes of Colli Laziali east of Velletri, undetected by the enemy. By dawn on 31 May, American troops had made a deep penetration that flanked both enemy corps, and not a shot had been fired to herald their advance. When the Germans discovered this dangerous penetration of their defensive line, they counter-attacked; but the 36th Division held to its key positions which outflanked the main enemy line of resistance and permitted the advance on Rome to continue. (Map No. 25.)

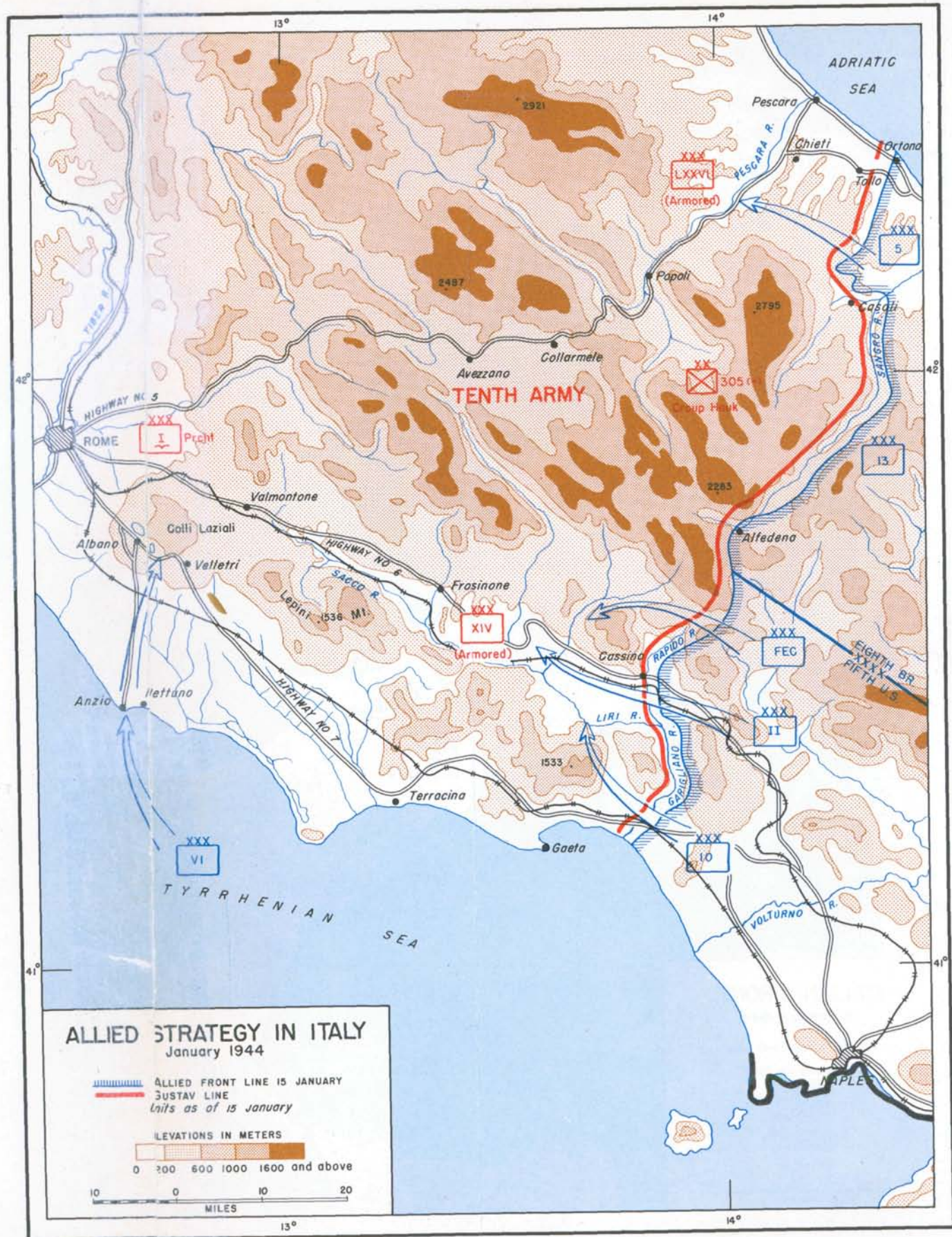
Despite their now untenable positions, the separated corps of *Fourteenth Army* fought hard for three days (31 May–2 June) to check the Fifth Army's advance. Enemy resistance was especially stiff on the VI Corps front to the west of Colli Laziali. But when II Corps swept around the north of the mountains and the 36th Division reached the central heights of Colli Laziali, the enemy decided that the time had come to pull out. On the night of 2–3 June the main enemy forces hurriedly withdrew northward, leaving only scattered rear guards to impede the Fifth Army's advance into Rome. On 3 June all units of the Fifth Army hastened after the retreating enemy, and at 0800 on the morning of 4 June the first American troops reached the outskirts of Rome. Actual entry into the city was delayed until early afternoon when elements of the 1st Armored and 36th Divisions moved in simultaneously to occupy the Italian

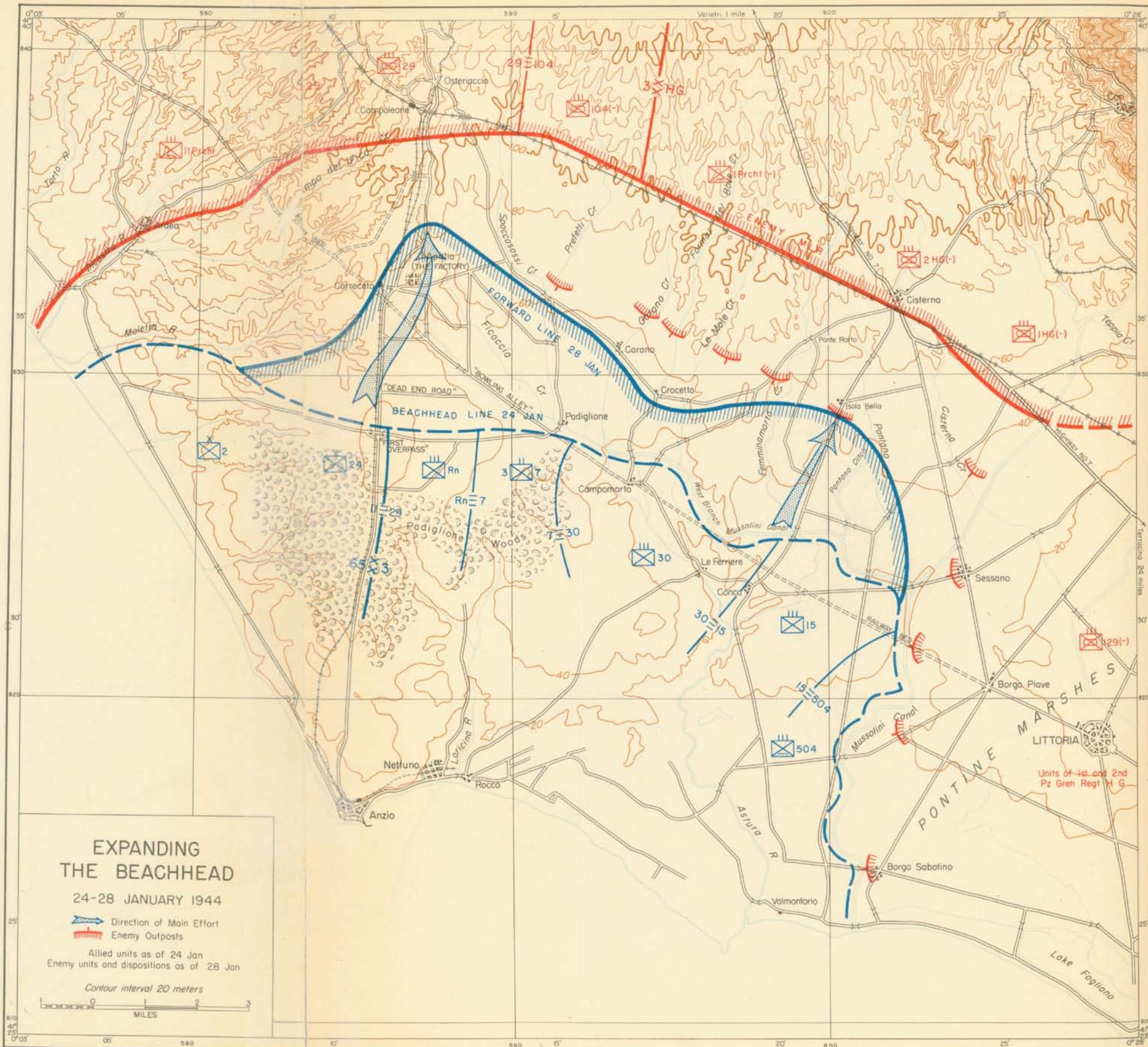
capital. By the end of the day, Fifth Army troops held the entire south bank of the Tiber from the sea to the junction of the Tiber and Aniene Rivers above Rome. By the next evening, the tide of battle had rolled far beyond Rome, as Fifth Army pursued the fleeing enemy to its next line of mountain defenses.

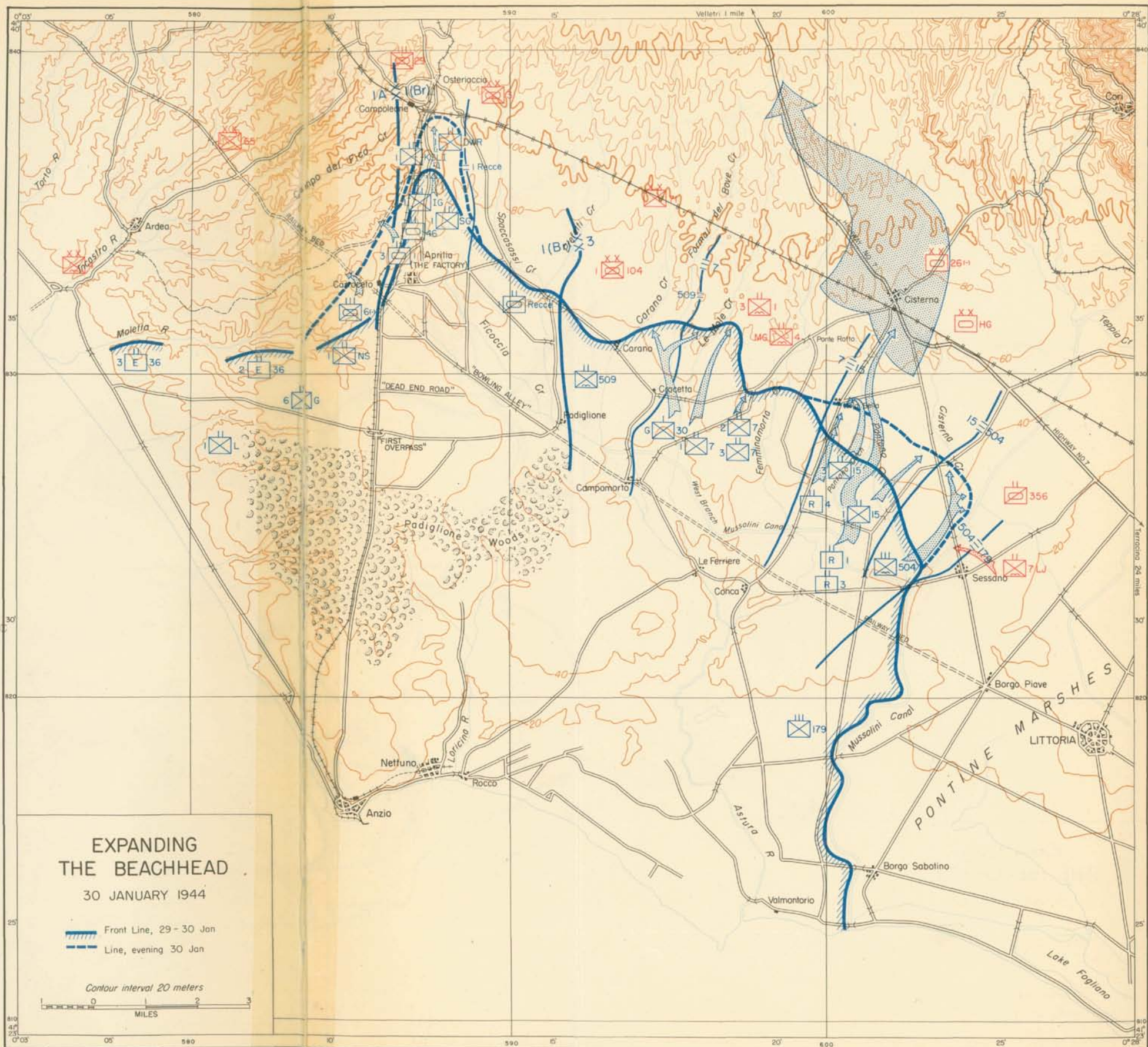
With the capture of Rome, Fifth Army attained the ultimate goal toward which the Anzio landing had originally been directed. On the eve of the landing on 22 January, the Allied High Command had hoped that the surprise assault behind the German *Tenth Army*, combined with a strong offensive in the south, would collapse the enemy's resistance along the Gustav Line and lead to a rapid march on Rome. Actually, the Anzio assault did not become a phase in an over-all Allied offensive, for the attack in the south stalled on the very day that the men of VI Corps swarmed unopposed over the beaches near Anzio. What had been envisioned as a brief operation coordinated with an Allied drive from the south became an isolated and bitter struggle to preserve a strategic foothold far behind the main enemy line of defense. Reinforced, Allied VI Corps was able to hold the beachhead, and then to build up its forces to fulfill its role in the spectacular spring offensive. Operation SHINGLE was crowned with final success; the grim defense of the American and British troops who held the Anzio beachhead led to a victory that forecast the collapse of the German war machine and the triumphant conclusion of the Allied war effort.

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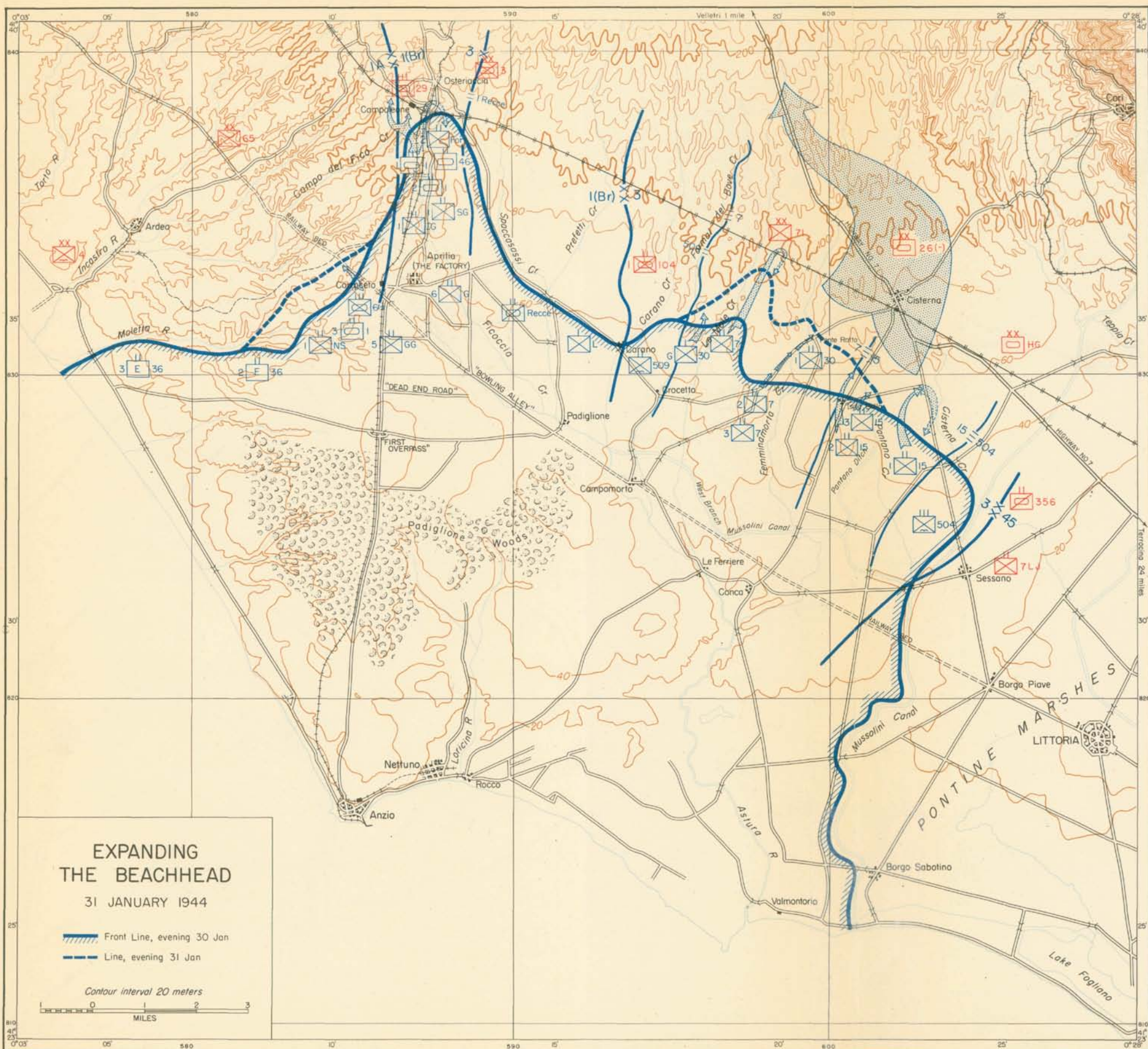
EXPANDING THE BEACHHEAD

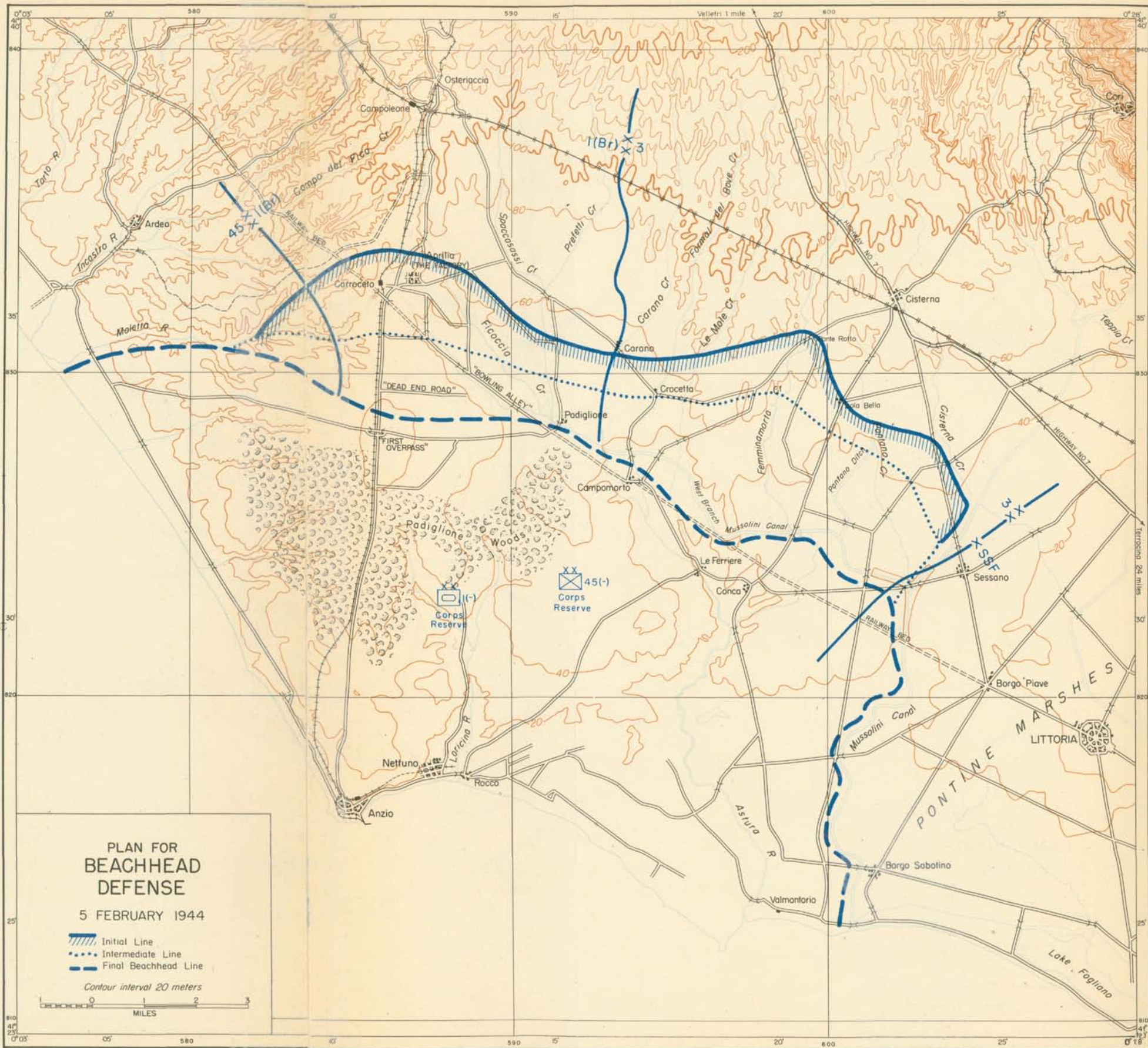
30 JANUARY 1944

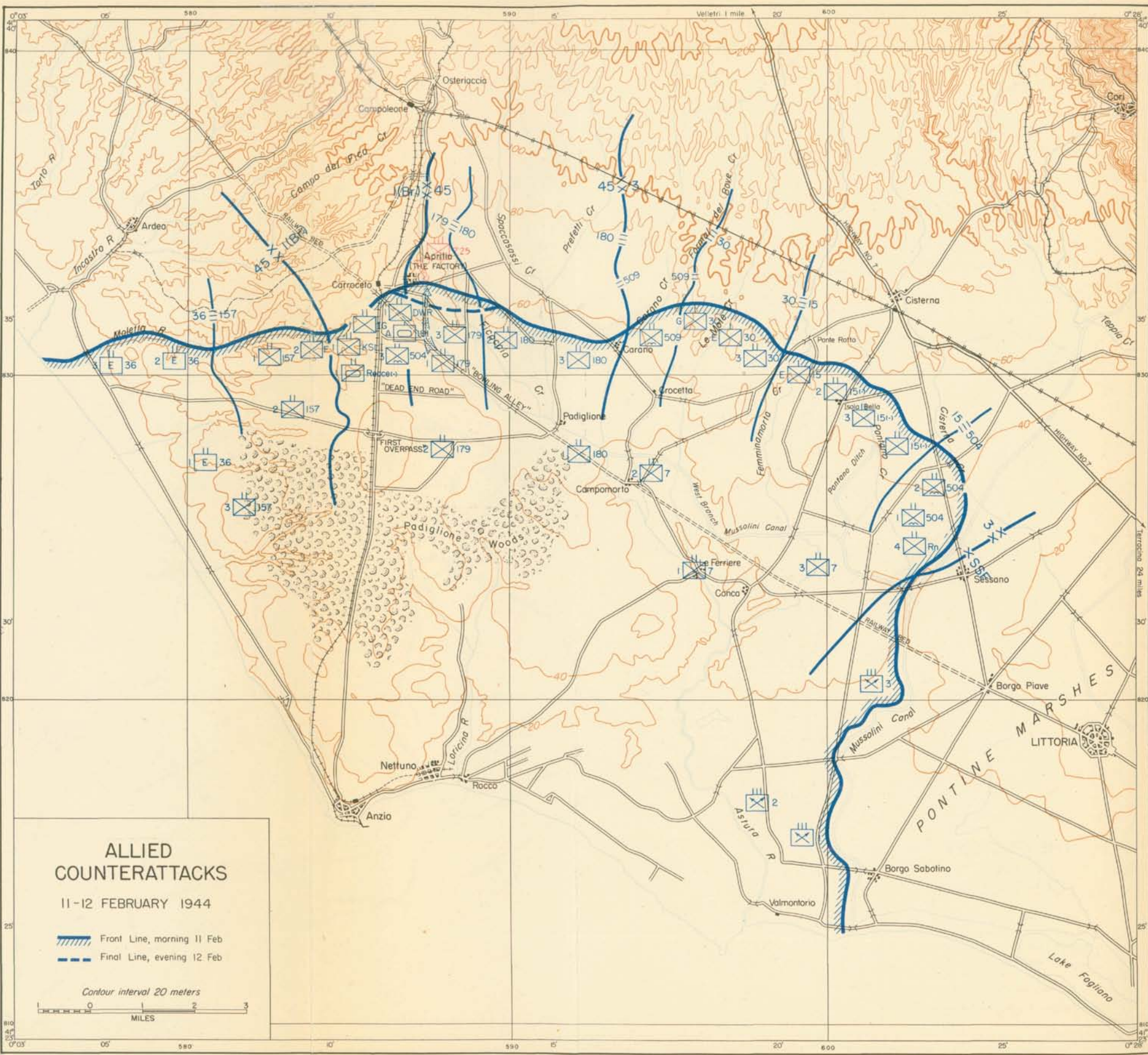
Front Line, 29 - 30 Jan
Line, evening 30 Jan

Contour interval 20 meters

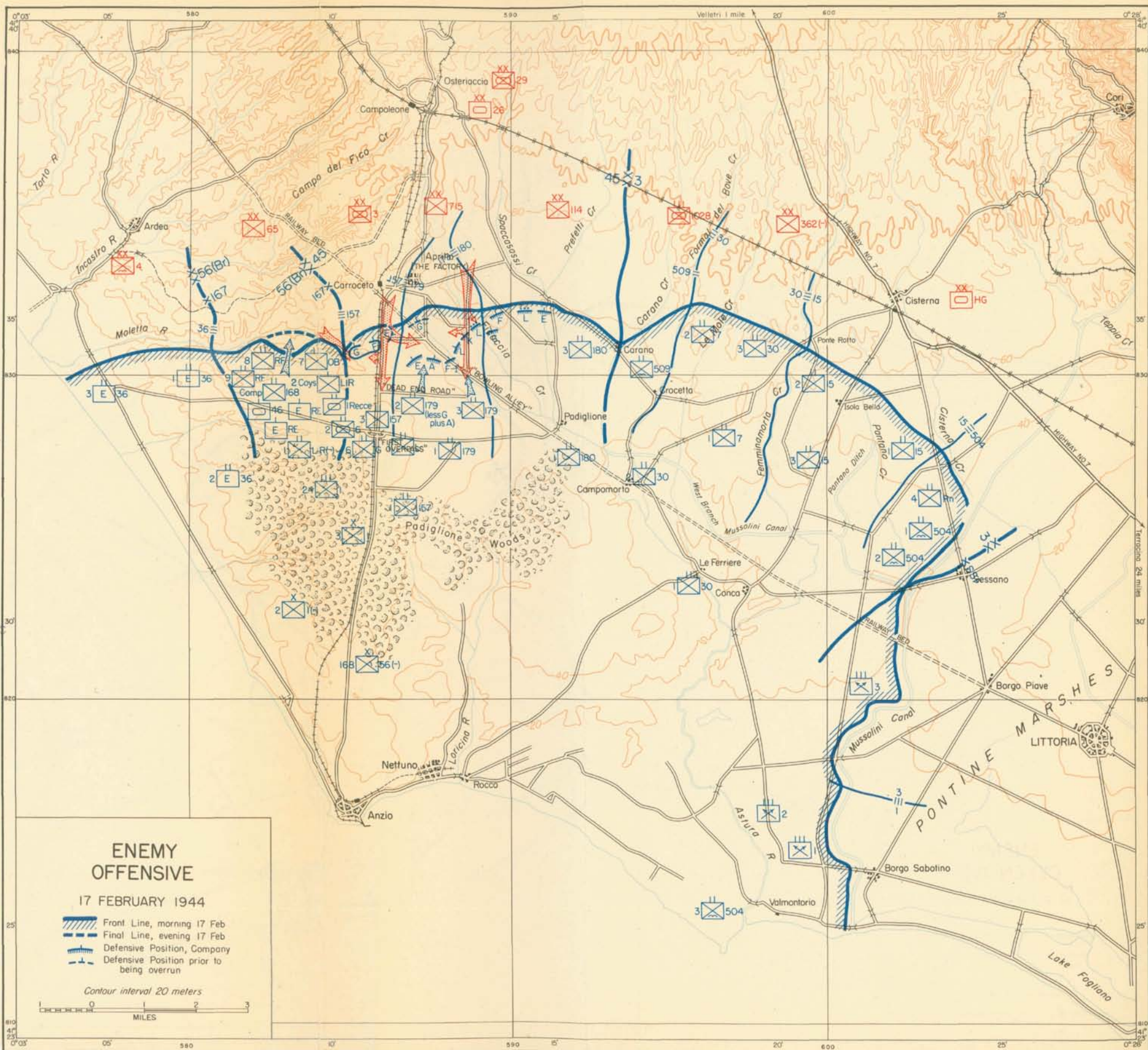
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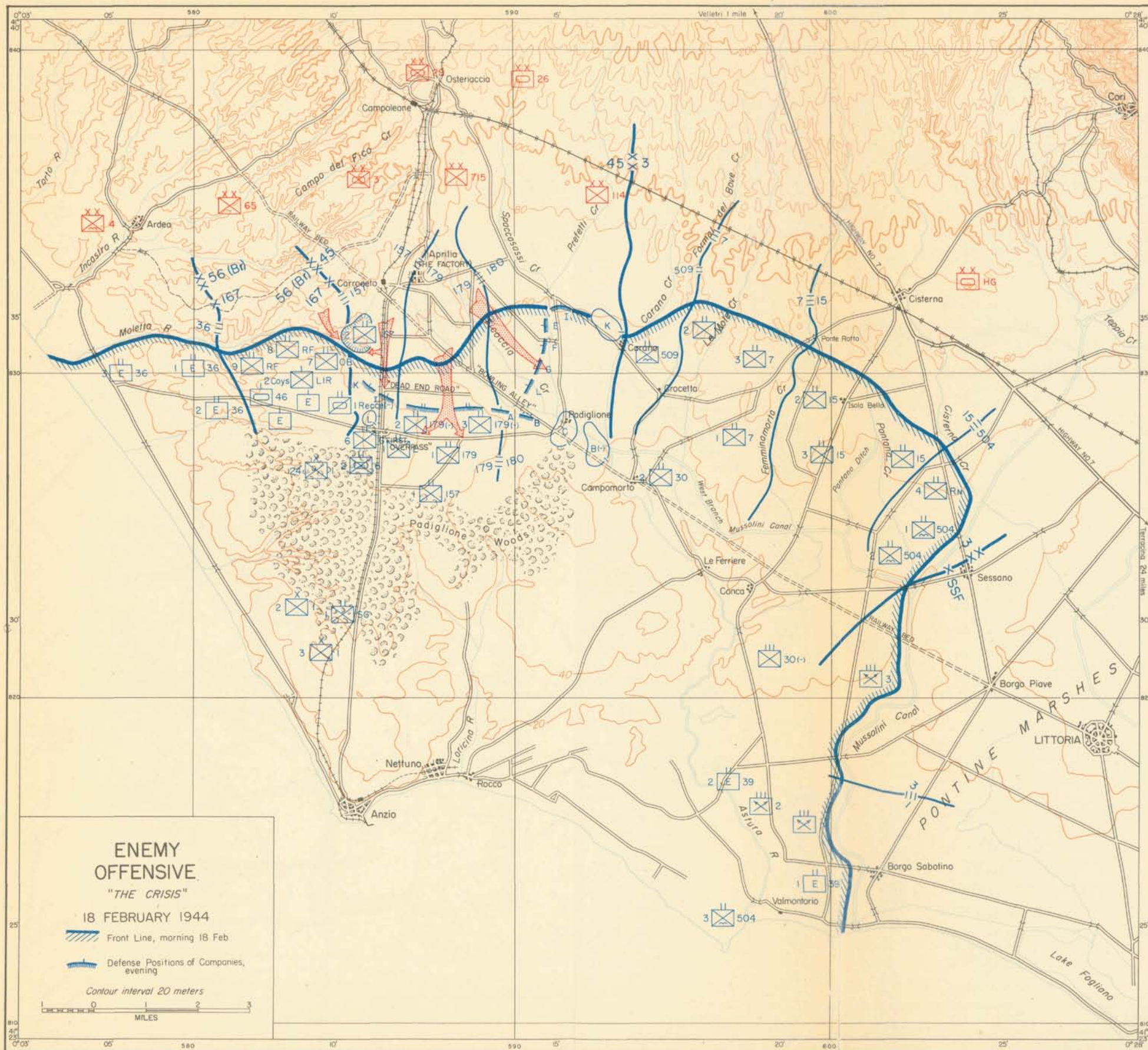


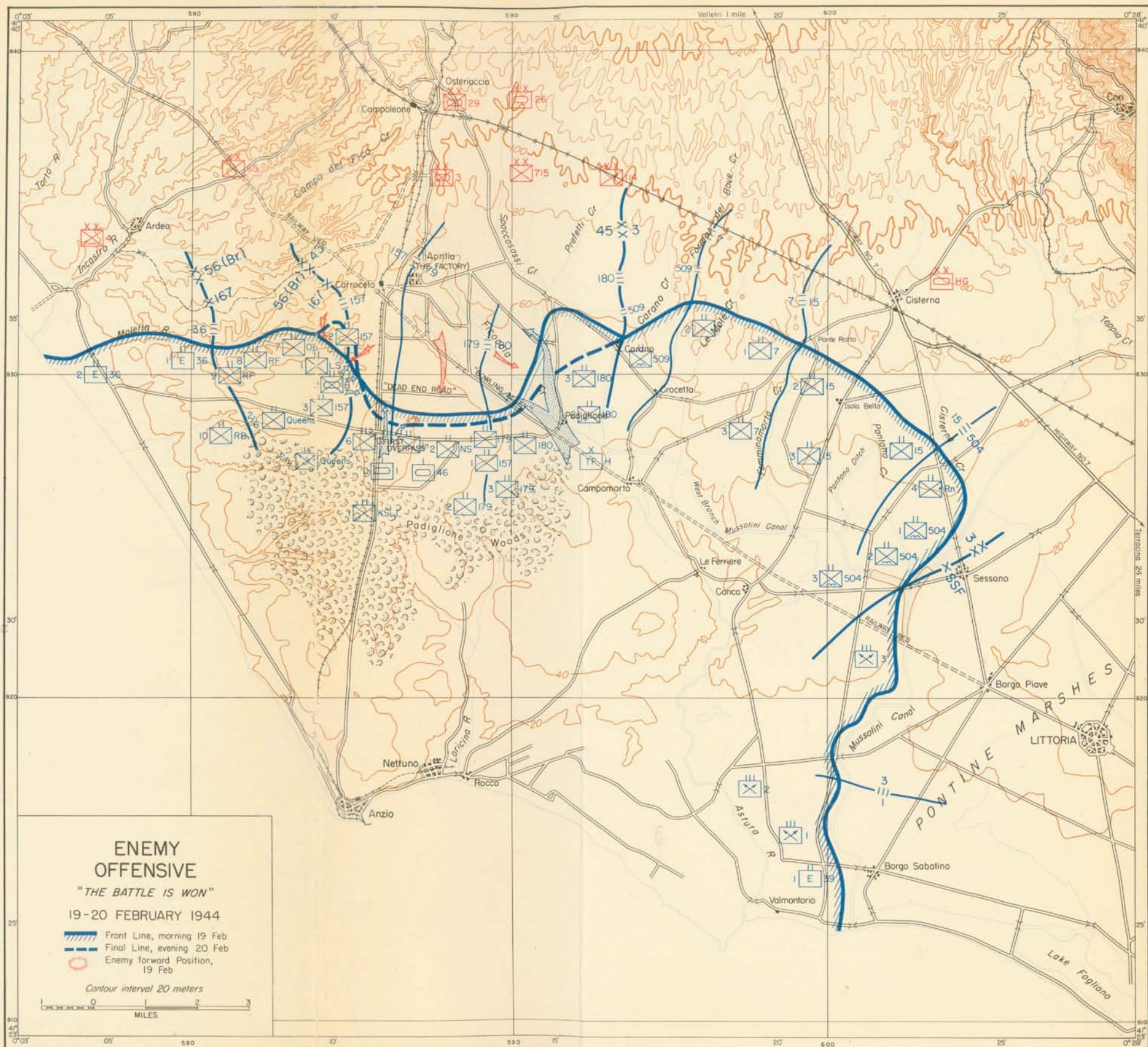


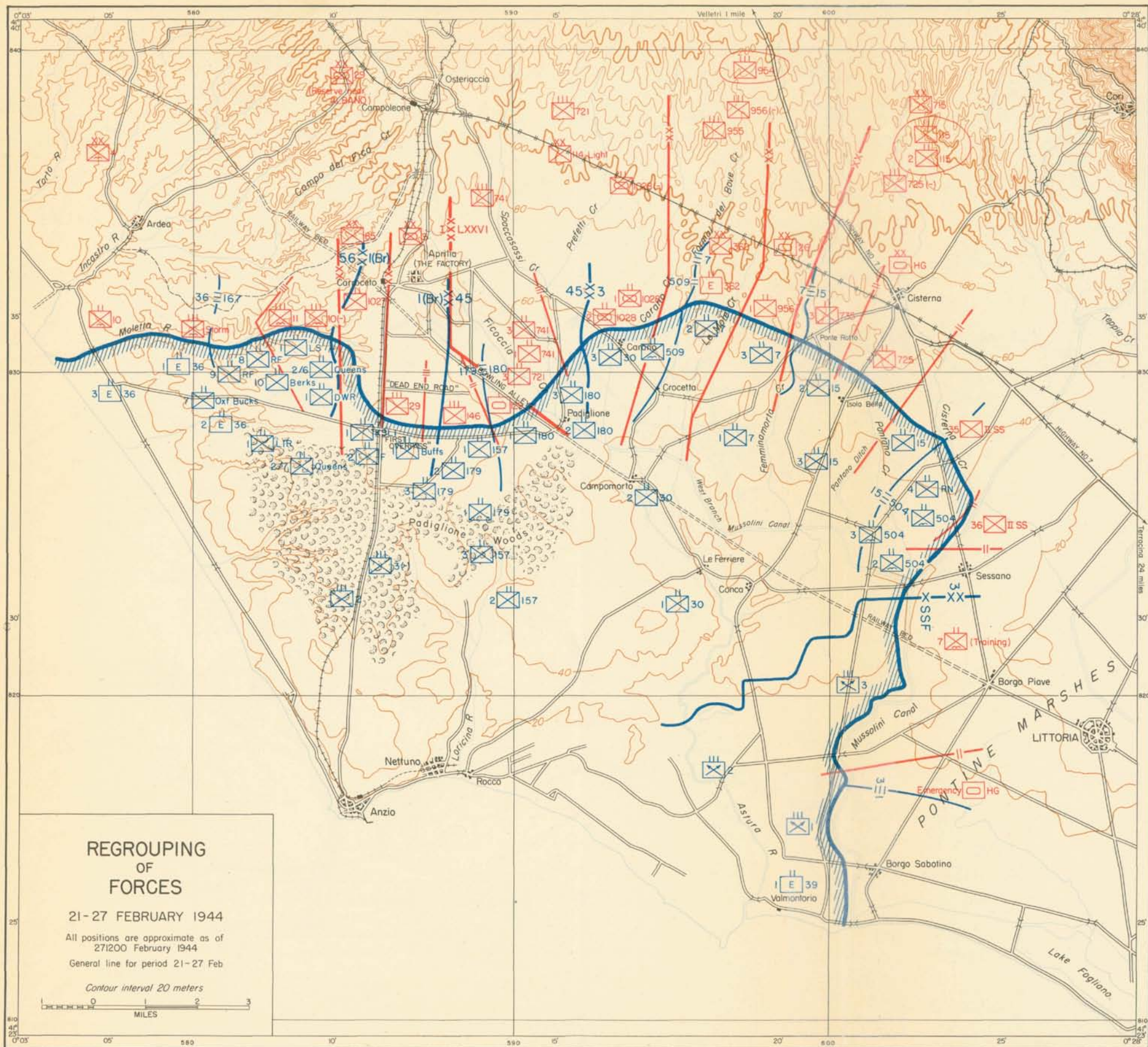


MAP NO. 14

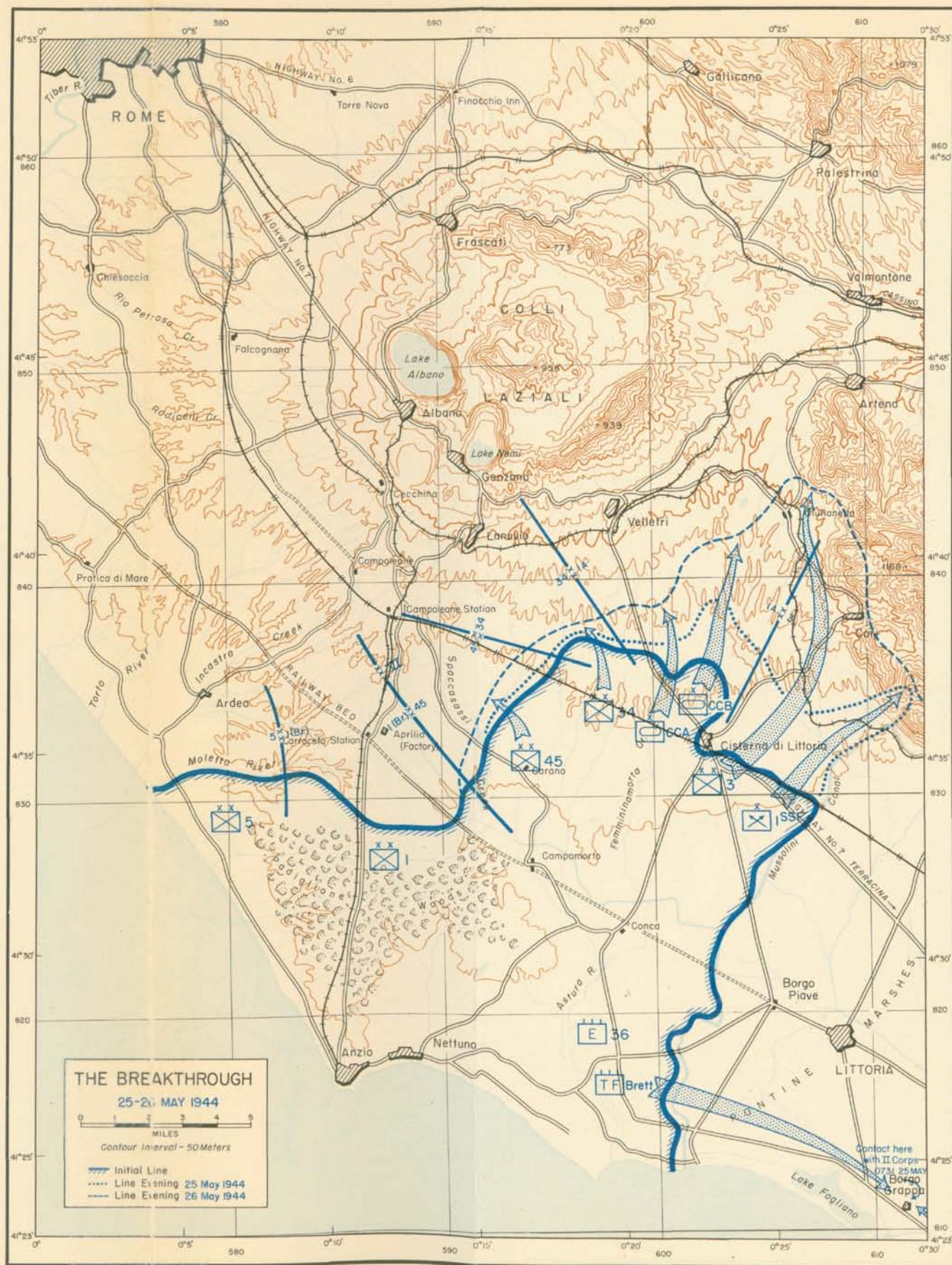














ANZIO
BEACHHEAD
MAPS

DATE DUE(DA Pamp 12-25)

JAN 31 1978			
MAR 13 1979			
APR 06 1980			
MAY 25 1981			
FEB 06 1984			
MAY 21 1986			
APR 18 1986			
MAY 8 1986			
JUL 24 1987		DEC 31 1976	
JUN 10 1988		SEP 17 1970	
JUN 24 1988		FEB 11 1975	
APR 28 1989		CT 28 1972	
IL(16)		MAR 26 1971	
		DEC 11 1961	

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